MORTON COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

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County Auditor

Commissioners:
Cody Schulz, Chairman
Bruce Strinden, Vice Chairman
James Boehm
Andy Zachmeier
Ron Leingang

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Morton County Leaders Participate in Meeting with Governor and Local Farmers and Ranchers
click link to watch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKOJgcaJFWs&feature=youtu.be

Mandan, ND - Morton County Commissioners Cody Schulz and Bruce Strinden, along with Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier met with local farmers and ranchers in southern Morton County Wednesday in a continuing effort to understand their perspective and concerns about the impacts of the ongoing Dakota Access Pipeline protests. The meeting was initiated and led by Gov. Doug Burgum. Members of the Governor's cabinet and District 31 legislators also participated.

Chad and Julie Ellingson hosted the gathering of more than 50 farmers, ranchers, and rural residents at their ranch near St. Anthony. Many people shared their experiences over the past five months and expressed their concerns for the future. The main themes of the comments were worries about safety in the future and holding those responsible for illegal activity accountable.

"I was very pleased and encouraged by the meeting," said Morton County Commission Chairman Cody Schulz. "The discussion was very honest and frank. People are frustrated, and in some cases scared, but I am just so thankful that people took the time to attend. I'm also grateful to the Governor for taking the time to truly hear the concerns of Morton County residents."

Residents shared their experiences of vandalized equipment, stolen hay, trespassing on their land and in their yards, and missing livestock. Parents also mentioned the stress placed on them and their children from schools being locked down a number of times because of protest activity.

"The farming and ranching community is really the heart and soul of Morton County," said Morton County Commissioner Bruce Strinden. "The folks we were able to talk to are the people who have been most affected by the protests, so it is incredibly important we take their concerns into account."

"I'm glad I got to hear some of the specific concerns of the farmers and ranchers," said Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier. "We will continue to do everything necessary to keep our citizens safe. Public safety has been my top priority from the very beginning, and it will continue to be."

County leaders and the Governor thanked everyone for their restraint and patience and expressed their continued dedication to bring the unlawful activities to a peaceful and swift conclusion.

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